

**SECTARIAN TREND OF TAFSIR: A CASE STUDY
OF QADIRIYYAH AND TIJJANIYYAH IN NORTHERN
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The menace of sectarianism in the recent time among the Muslims of Northern Nigeria has reached a point whereby each sect or religious organization is using the *Tafsir* of the Qur'an in defense of their sentimental views. This situation led to the emergence of a new trends of *Tafsir* in Northern Nigeria. The present article highlights on the trend of *Tafsir* of the *Tijjaniyyah* and *Qadiriyyah* Sufi Orders. It presents a practical examples of such *Tafsir* in defense of their doctrines against the attack of their opponents, the *Jama'at Iزالatil Bid'ah wa Iqamatus Sunnah* (Society For Eradication of Innovation and The Establishment of the *Sunnah*), an offshoot of *Wahabiyyah* movement. The Qur'anic basis of Sufism, Sufi practices and *Tawassul* were presented in accordance with their *Tafsir*. The article concluded with observations and recommendations.

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INTRODUCTION

The history of *Tafsir* is as old as the spread of Islam in Nigeria. As a vital subject for the understanding of Islam, the Muslims should know the meaning of its contents in order to apply its teaching in practical life. Many Muslim scholars started to impart the knowledge of *Tafsir* to make the people understand the clear message of the *Qur'an*. It is expected that the teaching of *Tafsir* will guide the general affairs of mankind in line with the commandments of Allah and help to minimize the problems that our society is facing in all our aspects of lives. It is believed that all problems associated with our backwardness and under development could be minimized if not eroded completely if the message of the *Qur'an* is clearly delivered to the people by the *Mufassirun* and the people applied them in their daily lives.

Unfortunately, many *Mufassirun* in Northern Nigeria do not concentrate to convey the real *Qur'anic* message to the people, instead resorted to interpret the *Qur'an* to support their sectarian ideologies. The *Qur'an* was made subjective to sectarian views, a situation that led to the disunity and weakness of the Muslims in Northern Nigeria as a result of bad approach of some *Mufassirun* to *tafsir*. This tendency has weakened the formidability of the Muslim *Ummah* and exposed it to attack from our non-Muslim counterparts.

1- MEANING OF TAFSIR

Tafsir is defined as a branch of knowledge by which the Book of Allah (SWT) that was revealed to prophet Muhammad

(SAW) is understood by explaining its meanings and deducting its laws and wisdom. It involves explaining the *Qur'anic* meaning, expressions, recitation, simple and composite injunctions, reasons and places of revelation etc. in order to bring its understanding to human level.

DIVISION OF TAFSIR

The Muslim scholars divided Tafsir into three broad categories namely:

- *Tafsir bil Riwayah*. It is also called *Tafsir bil naql* or *bil Ma'thur*.
- *Tafsir bil Dirayah*. It is also called *Tafsir bil Ra'y*
- *Tafsir bil Isharah*. It is also called *Tafsir al Ishari* by the

scholars.

TAFSIR BIL MA'THUR

Tafsir bil Ma'thur refers to interpretation of the Qur'an by transmission. It consists of Qur'an explaining itself through using other portions of the Qur'an, explanations transmitted from the Prophet (SAW), his companions and *Tabi'un* (followers of the companions). It is a traditional type of Tafsir, because it is based on information received from the men around the Prophet (SAW). In short, the ingredients of *Tafsir bil Ma'thur* consist of the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet, and the explanations made by the companions and their followers. This is the best type of Tafsir among all others.

TAFSIR BIL RA'Y

It is also called by the *Sahabah* as *Tafsir bil Ma'qul*, here the *Mufassir* does not based his Tafsir directly on transmission of knowledge by the predecessors, but on the use of

reason and *ijtihad* based on sound sources. We should note that the use of reasoning in this type of Tafsir is resorted to only in the absence of any authentic transmitted evidence about issues in the Qur'an. Some scholars opposed to this type of Tafsir while some accepted it under certain conditions. *Tafsir bil Ra'y* is divided into two categories namely; *Tafsir bil Ra'y al Mahmud* (praiseworthy and accepted one) an *Tafsir bil Ra'y al madhmum* (blameworthy and rejected one).

TAFSIR BIL RA'Y AL MAHMUD (PRAISEWORTHY)

The word *al Mahmud* means the good, praised or accepted one. This is the type of *Tafsir bil Ra'y* whereby the *Mufassir* has met all the prerequisite requirements for a sound and good Tafsir. It is also known as *al Tafsir al Mashru'* (the Tafsir accepted by the Shari'ah).

TAFSIR BIL RA'Y AL MADHMUM (BLAMEWORTHY)

The word *madhmum* means blameworthy, rejected or distorted one. This is the type of *Tafsir bil Ra'yi* whereby the *Mufassir* lacks the needed requirements for Tafsir or that he has all the requirements but uses his deviant opinions and sectarian whims and caprices to interpret the Qur'an. Almost all sectarian types of Tafsir belong to this category.

TRENDS OF TAFSIR BIL- RA'Y

By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Greek philosophy and science that had been translated in the previous centuries began to have effect on almost all various Islamic fields of study. The door of *Tafsir* according to personal opinion was thus opened. Works on *Tafsir* soon began to reflect various trends of thought in Muslim society. Sectarian inclinations started to reflect in the *Tafsir* of the Qur'an. Each trend of thought tried to use the *Qur'an*

Tafsir to justify its thought and oppose its opponents. It is in line with this that the present paper will look at the Tafsir of the *Qadiriyyah* and *Tijjaniyyah* in Northern Nigeria.

TAFSIR AL ISHARI (SYMBOLIC OR INDICATIVE TAFSIR)

Tafsîr bi-l ishâra, literally, the interpretation of the subtle allusions, which is also known as *tafsîr faidî* or *kashfî*, that which uses mystical experience or disclosure. This approach is particularly found among the mystics or *Sufis* who draw on traditional sources but also used spiritual experiences. It is the type of *Tafsir* which considers the distance meaning of a text and does not necessarily go with the direct or literal meaning of the text.

It is the interpretation of hidden meaning of the Qur'an. It is not central on speculation but in training and molding the spirit so as to attain a level of perfection and closeness to God. Such Tafsir is normally carried out by talented and gifted scholars those that Allah (SWT) has opened their hearts and enlightened their minds. They do not rely much on acquired knowledge. This is only a gift from Allah (*al ilm luduniy*) which is achieved through piety, steadfastness and closeness to Allah. The Tafsir of the *Qadiriyyah* and *Tijjaniyyah* in Northern Nigeria have indirectly subscribed to this type of Tafsir.

THE QADIRIYYAH AND THE TIJJANIYYAH

The *Qadiriyyah* and the *Tijjaniyyah* are the two major Sufi orders in northern Nigeria. The *Qadiriyyah* has found its way into Hausaland with the arrival of Sheikh Abdulkarim al Maghili in the fifteen century. Its widespread happen after the emergence of Sokoto jihad movement and the subsequent establishment of the Sokoto caliphate in the nineteenth century.

The *Tijjaniyah* on the other hand had penetrated northern Nigeria with the arrival of Sheikh Umar al Futi (1794-1864), some asserted that there were some number of Tjjanis at Madabo quarters in Kano before the arrival of Sheikh Umar al Futi. With the growing number of members of these orders, a sort of political struggle between them emerged. Each trying to dominate or supersede the other. Pamphlets on the *karamat* and excellence of the founder of each *Tariqah* in an attempt to supersede the other were in circulation.

The issue of *Qabd* (praying with hands folded on the chest) and *Sadl* (praying with the hands outstretched) form of *Salat* has created a sharp division between the *Qadiris* and the *Tijjanis*. Even within the *Tijjanis* there was a division between the *ulama'* of Madabo who disapproved *Qabd*, and the *ulama'* of Salga who practiced *Qabd*. The division went to the extent of attacking each other in writing.

With the appearance of Sheikh Ibrahim Inyass Khaolakh in 1951, he practiced *Qabd* form of *salat*. Late Sheikh Nasir Kabara, the then leader of *Qadiriyyah* order, was among the few who pray in *Qabd* form before, now reverted to pray in *Sadl* form to dissociate himself from Sheikh Ibrahim Kaolakh. This problem became serious to the extent that the followers of each *Tariqah* refused to pray behind an *Imam* who practiced a position of arm different from their own. The struggle between the two orders continued up to the time of the advent of the *Izala* sect.

The criticism of Sheikh Abubakar Gummi against the doctrines and practices of Sufi orders in northern Nigeria served as a major unifying factor for the *Tijjaniyyah* and the *Qadiriyyah* followers. It shifted the attention of *Qadiriyyah* followers from

their traditional rivalry with the *Tijjaniyyah* followers over the issue of *Qabd* and *Sadl* and the controversies over the superiority complex of one *Tariqah* over the other.

Both the *Qadiriyyah* and the *Tijjaniyyah ulama'* now resorted to write a rejoinder against the book "*al Aqidah al Sahihah bi Muwafaqati al Shari'ah*" (The Right Belief is in the Following of the Shari'ah) written by Sheikh Abubakar Gummi on attack on Sufism in general and the *Qadiriyyah* and the *Tijjaniyyah* in particular. Sheikh Nasir Kabara for example has published two books, *al Nasihah al Sarihah fi al Radd ala al aqidah al Sahihah* (Frank Advice in Response to *al Adidah al Sahihah*) and *al minah al Hamidah Fi al Radd ala Fasid al Aqidah* (Praiseworthy Gifts in Response to the One who is Corrupted in His Faith) respectively.

Another rejoinder was written by Sheikh Ibrahim Saleh Maiduguri in 1982 with the title *al Takfir akhtar al Bid'ah*. Sheikh Tahir Uthman Bauchi also wrote a book called *Gaskiya Ta Bayyana* (The Truth Has Emerged) as a counter attack to Sheikh Gummi's *al Aqidah al Sahihah*. Another book jointly published by the *Tijjaniyyah* and the *Qadiriyyah ulama'* in Ilorin to repel Sheikh Gummi's *al Aqidah al Sahihah* was *Raf' al Shubuhah an ma fi Qadiriyyah wa al Tijjaniyyah min al Shatahat* (Lifting the Doubts about the Devinations of the *Qadiriyyah* and the *Tijjaniyyah*). This coalition between the *Qadiriyyah* and the *Tijjaniyyah* against the *Izala* later led to the emergence of a new trend of *Tafsir* meant for fighting back against the opposition.

2 THE AIMS OF THEIR TAFSIR

The main aim of this *Tafsir* according to the *Tariqah* followers is to teach the Muslims the correct and right Islamic beliefs according to the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. It

was also aimed at defending the true Islamic faith as contained in the Sufi doctrines and practices. They will not relent efforts therefore, to whenever they pass on a verse that seems to have Sufi inclination to interpret it to suit their views.

3 THE FOCUS OF THEIR TAFSIR

The main focus of this type of *Tafsir* is on the issues that has to do with *Sufi* doctrines and practices. It focused on the basis of Sufism and the Sufi practice from the Qur'an. Other areas include *dhikr*, *wasilah*, *istigatha*, celebrating the *Maulud al Nabi*, the issue of intercession, etc. Below are the typical instances that portray the *Sufi* interpretation of the Qur'an in northern Nigeria.

4 ON THE BASIS OF TARIQAH IN THE QUR'AN

Late Sheikh Nasir Kabara Kano, the leader of *Qadiriyyah* order in Africa on interpretation of the verse 16 of *surah al jinn* where Allah says: "وَأَنْ لَوْ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقِينَهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا" (الجن: 16)

...if they (the pagans) had (only) remained on the (right)

Way, We shall certainly have bestowed on them rain in abundance.

He commented on the verse as follows:

The reality of the matter is that if these kuffar should stand on the right way of Islam, We should certainly should have bestowed on them rain in abundance.

In his foot notes he said:

The people of bid'ah of our time are rejecting Sufism, saying that they don't know its basis in the Qur'an. This is only a blindness of heart. If not so, this verse has clearly expressed the meaning of Tariqatul Islam, which Sheikh Muhalli interpreted as Tariqah, is the Tariqah of Junaid [RTA]. It emanates from the

activities of Ahlussuffah, on whose many verses were revealed expressing their spiritual positions and their sincerity after the revelation of the verses of Tawhid. As explained by Sawi that it means acting upon it in following the commands and shunning from prohibitions which is the Taqwah (piety), and that was out rightly the Tariqah of the Sufis. What they usually performed in an extraordinary manner, that is (Karamat) blessings and inspired knowledge (Ilhamah) was as a result of their piety. It is because of this they said "Fear Allah, and you will see wonders". If to say Allah will guide the people of innovation and put them on the right way and act righteously and piously as learnt from the prophet of Allah (SAW), they should not have hesitate or reject the reality of "La ilaha illallah". All these statements were the consensus of ulama'. May Allah guide us....

Here it is to note that this verse was revealed drawing the attention of the polytheists to accept Islam, and on return Allah bestow on them His abundant bounties like rain and other means of sustenance, but in the process of interpreting the verse, Sheikh Nasir Kabara explained that this verse was one of the basis of *Qadiriyyah* order in the Qur'an. In his *Tafsir* he categorized the verse under the title "*Tariqar Junaidu a cikin al Qur'ani*", meaning "Junaid's *Tariqah* in the Qur'an. Similarly, on the interpretation of verse 10 of *surah al Jumu'ah* where Allah says:

(فإذا قضيت الصلوة فانتشروا في الأرض وابتغوا من فضل الله واذكروا الله كثيرا لعلكم تفلحون) الجمعة 10:

And when the prayer is finished, then you may disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah: and celebrate the Praises of Allah often (and without stint): that you may prosper.

Sheikh Kabara interpreted the verse as, And when the prayer is finished, then disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah: and remember Allah much so that you may prosper.

He went on to explain that, the phrase (واذكروا الله كثيرا) and remember Allah much" is the basis of Friday dhikr and mi'ad in the Qadiriyyah Sufi order.

Sheikh Tahir Usman Bauchi also interpreted this verse as one of the basis of *dhikr al Jumua'ah* observed by the Tijjanis in congregation every Friday after *Asr* prayers shortly before the *Maghrib* prayers.

On the verses 41-42 of *surah al Ahzab*, where Allah says,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا (41) وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا)
الأحزاب 41-42

O you who believe! Remember Allah much. And glorify Him morning and evening.

Sheikh Kabara's interpretation goes thus,

O you who believe, celebrate the praises of Allah; and do this often; (Anything that is called Dhikrullah is included in this command, Prayers, Fasting or Dhikrullah Ta'ala like 'Bandir' or any other thing as confirmed by Muslim scholars in their books. Even the Maulawiyyah form of Dhikr by the disciples of Jalalur Rumi, because the Muslims have unanimously agreed upon these issues on *Arbabul Ahwal* as said by Suyuti) and glorify Allah morning and evening.

Here Sheikh Kabara went on to justify the use of '*Bandir*' music in performing *Dhikr* of *Qadiriyyah* and extended it to

include the musical type of *Dhikr* performed by the Maulawiyyah order of Jalal al Rumi which many Muslims objected to including many Sufis. Surprisingly, Sheikh Kabara in the commentary stipulated that the Muslims have unanimously agreed on the permissibility of this type of *Dhikr* in an attempt to justify his stand.

On the *Tafsir* of verse 56 of the same *surah* where it reads,
(إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا

تَسْلِيمًا). الأحزاب 56

Allah and His angels send blessings on the prophet O you who believe! Send your blessings on him, and salute him with all respect.

On interpreting the verse, he says, (One of the 3 pillars of Sufi orders, blessing the prophet (SAW), Hailala (La ilah illa Allah) and Istigfar). Surely, Allah and His angels send blessings on the prophet (SAW). O you who believe! Send blessings on him and salute him with all respect (that is to say:

May Allah bless our leader Muhammad and blessed).

Here he defended the view that, the *Sufi* practices has originated from the Qur'an, as this verse has mentioned one of the three pillars of *Tariqah* according to his interpretation. He also justified the congregational *Dhikr* in the mosque as done by the Qadiris from the Qur'an in verse 28 of *surah al Kahf*. He reiterated that the verse teaches the basis of Sufism and the position of the Sufis and rejected the views of the anti-Sufis who regarded the whole *Sufi* institution as innovative. Allah says:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾. الكهف: 28

And keep yourself content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His face; and let not your eyes pass beyond them seeking the pomp and glitter of this life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds.

His interpretation is as follows,(Command to associate with those that are truthful in Allah, Sufis and their like). Keep a company with those that worship their Lord morning and evening seeking for Allah's pleasure with their devotion (not because of one's need of here and hereafter, nay, they want to attain Allah's pleasure only, these are the real "Fuqara'" and :Murids".) Do not turn yourself away from them seeking wordly pleasures. Do not follow those that We made their hearts unmindful of remembrance of Allah (al Qur'an and other adhkar, he is Uyaynah ibn Hisnu al Fazari and his associates in those days. But now it is referring to anybody who is proud of modern civilization that contradict the Holy Qur'an and what the prophet (SAW) trained his companions upon peace and blessings of Allah be with them. It is said that this verse was revealed on Ashabus Suffah, they were 700 residing in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah. They don't go out for trade or farming or rearing animals. They are there always for salat in the mosque. When the verse was revealed, the prophet (SAW) said: Praise be to Allah who directed me in my Ummah to keep their company. This verse is the basis of Sufism and the Sufis in the Qur'an. May Allah include us among them and bless us with being with them and take our lives on their way....) He follows his whims and his affairs became in ruin.

In another context he said, This verse is a justification that the Sahabah of the prophet (SAW) conducted dhikr in unison inside the prophet's mosque and in his presence in the mornings and evenings. Therefore whoever said doing dhikr inside the mosque is innovative, such person does not know the Qur'an. If

one refers to the Tafsir book of Ibn Kathir, the book that is mostly referred to by such ulama' one will see that he interpreted this verse in the same way we did.

5 SHARI'AH AND HAQIQAH ACCORDING TO THE SUFIS

The Sufis believed that Islam consist of two parts namely, *Zahir* (Exoteric) and *Batin* (Esoteric). Shari'ah is representing the exoteric aspect while *Tasawwuf* is representing the esoteric aspect, the inner meaning of Islam (*Haqiqah*). Shari'ah refers to the way both of faith and practice which Allah has prescribed. It is the rule which govern religious practices. In Sufism it represents the first stage which the *Sufi* must adhere to strictly. It is the exoteric (outer) aspect of Islam which is verbal affirmation and apparent submission to the Islamic laws. On the other hand, *Haqiqah* refers to the esoteric (inner) aspect of Islam. The *Sufi* practices is the manifestation of the inner meaning of Islam (esoteric aspect).

Sheikh Nasir Kabara has attempted to justify this position when he came to interpret the verses 59-82 in *surah al Kahf* that narrates the story of prophet Musa (AS) and Khidr. He stipulated that the episode was meant to show prophet Musa (AS) his shortcomings when he claimed to be the most knowledgeable among his people instead of him to have said Allah is the most knowledgeable. Allah then joined him with a mere servant of Him who was not a prophet, Khidr, to learn from him. He further stated that, the basic teaching of the *Surah* is to show to the Muslims that there are Shari'ah provisions on one hand and the *Haqiqah* provision on the other hand. And this was attested in the encounter between prophet Musa (AS) and Khidr. Prophet Musa (AS) viewed all the actions of Khidr in the context of the Shari'ah, as such he regards them as deviation from the right path. On the contrary, Khidr acted the way he did based on guidance by the provisions of

'*Haqiqah*' and as such explained to prophet Musa (AS) the basis of all his actions. This explanation signifies that he did not commit them out of his own whims.

The general teachings of these verses is that humans should consider knowledge as a sole property of Allah. He, the Exalted knows everything and every knowledge emanates from Him. The messengers of Allah, the prophets and all other servants of Allah that were bestowed with knowledge were given only a bit portion from the treasury of Allah.

6 THE BASIS OF TIJJANIYYAH AND ITS AWRAD IN THE QUR'AN ACCORDING TO THE TIJJANIS

The *Tijjaniyyah ulama'* like their *Qadiriyyah* counterparts, also believed that their *Tariqah* and its litanies has their basis from the Qur'an. Sheikh Tahir Uthman Bauchi, a popular Tijjani scholar in Nigeria and beyond, when interpreting verse 205 of *surah al A'raf*,

وَإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ ثُمَّ لَا يُقْصِرُونَ (202) الأعراف 202

And remember your Lord in your (very) soul, with humility.
And in reverence, without loudness in words, in the morning.
And evening; and be not among those who are unheedful.

In commenting on the verse he said:

Sheikh Uthman b Fodio wrote in his book, he said "Sufi orders are 313 in the Hadith of Tabarani". It is there written. And since Tijjaniyyah is the last in the hierarchy of Sufi orders, you see, as if the verse is referring to it here as a whole, the statement concluded with the mention of Tijjaniyyah here. "O you son of

Adam! Remember your lord alone, this is 'Lazim'. If we are doing our 'Lazim' we are not doing it in congregation no matter how many Tijjanis are present. Everybody is doing it individually.

Everybody is remembering Allah alone in the course of 'Lazim'.

(واذكر ربك في نفسك تضرعا وخيفة) And you should fear Allah in the course of remembrance with respect and piety. That is why we are not talking if we are doing 'Lazim' except if our mother or our father called us (then we answer them). (ودون الجهر من القول) And we should not say it aloud. Perform it in the morning and the evening. Do not put yourself among the unmindful ones those that are not remembering Allah. This verse is linked up with the verses that says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ {18} وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ {19} لَا يَسْتَوِي أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ {20} الحشر 18-20

This is 'Lazim' and the verse has shown how it is performed.

واذكر ربك في نفسك You mention the name of your lord alone with respect, humility and piety. This refers to facing the East (Qiblah) with ablution and in silence. (ودون الجهر من القول) You are not to say aloud what you are reciting. (بالغدو والأصال ولا تكن من الغفلين) And you do it in the morning and evening.

Do not be among the unmindful who forgot the remembrance of Allah.

(يا أيها الذين ءامنوا اذكروا الله ذكرا كثيرا . وأصيلا) (وصبحوه بكرة). It is referring to 'Wazifah' here. The time of its performance is not mentioned, that is why it is done in 24 hours of the day. This ayah consist of 'Wazifah' and 'Lazim'. (Where He) said 'Remember Allah much and do Tasbih morning and evening encompasses morning and evening 'Lazim'. Do it much is referring to 'Wazifah'.

In the whole 24 hours is a time of 'Wazifah' if there is a congregation. 'Kathiran' if Allah mention something wholly then we refer to scholars. (فسئلوا أهل الذكر إن كنتم لا تعلمون) "Ask those who know if you don't know". We then asked the knowledge, what is the meaning of 'Kathiran' here? At least you recite بسم الله الرحمن (أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم) you recite You recite 'Fatihah', you recite 'Istighfar' "Astaghfirullah al Azim alladhi la ilaha illa huwa al Hayyul Qayyum."30 times. You recite Salatil Fatih 50 times, you recite (سبحن ربك رب العزة عما يصفون) (*) وسلام على المرسلين (*) والحمد لله رب العلمين)

Then you recite لا إله إلا الله 100 times. You recite a salat called 'Jauharatil Kamal' 12 times. If you do this at least with 'Lazim' you are among those that remember Allah much.

In this biased interpretation, Sheikh Bauchi has subjected the verses of the Qur'an to justify the basis of *Tijjaniyyah* and its litanies in an attempt to repel the attack of their opponents and to keep the followers firm on the *Tariqah*.

Sheikh Halliru Abdullahi Maraya on interpreting the verse,
(قد افلح من تزكى) الأعلى : ١٤

But those will prosper who purify themselves.

After translating the verse he commented as follows' It is referring to the heart and the way of dhikr, which purify It from the evils of envy, arrogance, disgracing people, hurting One's body, whims and caprices, e.t.c. dhikr is therefore, purifying the heart. Sign of Allah's love is the love of Allah's dhikr and the sign of hatred to Allah is the hatred of Allah's dhikr. We should therefore, wake up and put efforts in doing dhikr.

Here he is encouraging people to continue practicing *Tariqah* and they should forget about those that are condemning it

because it purifies heart against evils and it is sanctioned in the Qur'an. He technically described the anti *Tariqah* as those that show no love to Allah. On the interpretation of verse 9 of *surah al A'lah*,

(فذكر إن نفعت الذكرى)

Therefore give admonition in case the admonition Profits (the hearer). After translating the verse, he commented as follows, (إن نفعت الذكرى) it is better for 'Yan Izalah that are condemning 'Yan Tariqah as unbelievers to stop it. Because they started preaching that people should leave Tariqah since 1978 and up till now they are yet to forsake it. إن نفعت الذكرى is signifying that if the admonition will benefit. Ibn Taymiyyah was a Qadiri, Ibn Abdul Wahab did not called people to do Tariqah and did not forbade them from doing it. He only preached against Tawassul, defying graves and similar things. Here in Nigeria too, Ibn Fodio was a Qadiri, Muhammad Bello was a Tijjani, Abdullah Gwandu was a Qadiri. Therefore, it is better for those that are calling to stop Tariqah in their preaching to stop it and take a rest since the adherents never leave it up to now... a person will say, this is not good but without evidence or authority.

Here Sheikh Maraya was trying to show that the claim of 'Yan Izalah' that they derived their source of condemning *Tariqah* from the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Abdul Wahab, Uthman ibn Fodio, Muhammad Bello and Abdullahi Gwandu was false and baseless. This is because he attributed the membership of *Qadiriyyah* and *Tijjaniyyah* to all of them with exception of Ibn Abdul Wahab who also was indifferent on *Tariqah*. Though he ascribed membership of *Qadiriyyah* and *Tijjaniyyah* to the aforementioned he did not gave reference to the source of his information.

7 ON THE CONCEPT OF WASILAH (MEANS OF APPROACH TO ALLAH)

The adherents of Sufi orders have considered the founders of these orders as their means of approaching Allah (SWT). For example, the Qadiris considered Sheikh Abdul Qadir al Jilani as their '*Wasilah*' (means of approach) to Allah and the Tijjanis consider Sheikh Ahmad al Tijjani as their '*Wasilah*' to Allah. They interpreted the verses of the Qur'an to support their ideas. For example Sheikh Tahir Uthman Bauchi, in his opening remarks on the occasion of *Maulud* Celebration in Lagos in the year 2010, he stated the following;

We should thank Allah for not leaving us to find the right way by Ourselves. He joined us with the Saints that guides. Allah said, if He wants to lead a person astray He deprived him of a Wali that Will guide him. Similarly, if He wants to guide him He assigned Him with a Wali that will guide him.

(من يهد الله فهو المهتد ومن يضلل فلن تجد له وليا مرشدا) الكهف: 17

"He whom Allah guides, is rightly guided; but he whom he sends astray, For him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him to the Right path." We thank Allah that gave us a Wali, Sheikh Tijjani (R.A).

As the prophet Muhammad (SAW) was a master and a leader to all Prophets, Sheikh Tijjani was a master and a leader to all Walis (Saints R.A). As Allah made the circle (Da'irah) of Tijjaniyyah a Successor to the Muhammadan circle, so he made our Khalifah Sheikh Ibrahim Khaulakh as our guide out of many successors. Praise be to Allah.

Here he tried to establish the justification of following Sheikh Ibrahim Khaulakh and Sheikh Ahmad Tijjani as a means of approach to Allah, not that they worship them as propagated by

their *Izalah* opponents. He went to the extent of saying that whoever is not attached to a spiritual guide there is every tendency to deviate from the right way. This is a clear sectarian sentiment in the *Tafsir* of this verse.

Similarly, on the issue of "*Wasilah*", Sheikh Nasir Kabara of Qadiriyyah order on interpretation of the verse 35 of *surah al Ma'idah*,

(يأيتها الذين ءامنوا اتقوا الله وابتغوا إليه الوسيلة وجاهدوا في سبيله لعلكم تفلحون)

O you who believe! Do your duty to Allah and fear Him. Seek the means of approach to Him, and strive hard In his cause as much as you can. So that you may be successful.

In commenting on the verse he said:

The meaning of this verse is that you should seek the means of approach to Allah through obedience, love for the prophets and the saints as well as accepting (and practicing) their litanies (award). Do not mind those people who consider visiting saints as kufr.

According to this interpretation, adhering to a particular Sufi order and performing its *award* as per the rules of that *Tariqah* is nothing more than translating the meaning of the said verse into action. Those that are condemning the *Tariqas* do not comprehend the meaning of the verse as such one should not mind them. He rendered this interpretation just to defend his *Qadiriyyah* order.

Again on "*Tawassul*" Sheikh Halliru Maraya on the *Tafsir* of verse 35 of *surah al Anbiya'* where Allah says:

(ألم تر أن الله سخر لكم ما في الأرض والفلك تجرى في البحر بأمره ويمسك السماء أن تقع على الأرض إلا بإذنه إن الله بالناس لرءوف رحيم) الحج : 65

Have you not seen that Allah has subjected to you all that is on the earth, and the ships that sail through the sea by His Command? He withhold the heaven from falling on the earth except by His Leave. Verily, Allah is, for mankind, full of Kindness Most Merciful .After translating the verse he comments as follows:

Everything loaded on the ship like motor vehicles, containers and other goods of material benefit will never sink in the ocean, because Allah has wished that it will not sink. The materials carried by the ship has made a *tawassul* with the ship, as such it will never sink.

Since Allah has wished that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) will never enter Hell Fire, so anybody who follows him and made *Tawassul* with him will never be burnt by Hell Fire. *Tawassul* with the Prophet is allowed whether in his life time or after his demise.

Here he uses the verse to counter attack the *Izalah* scholars who preached that *Tawassul* with the prophet (SAW) is only allowed during his life time, and that whoever did *Tawassul* with the prophet (SAW) after his death has committed an act of *shirk*. They further stated that *Tawassul* is only valid with one's good work like what the three people who were blocked in the cave did. He dismissed this view and went on to logically argue that almost everything is doing *Tawassul* consciously or unconsciously by citing example with ship carrying load. He concluded that *Tawassul* with the prophet is valid up to this time.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing we came to observed that sectarianism is playing a vital role in the *Tafsir* of the Qur'an in Northern Nigeria. They enlightened their subjects towards the understanding of Islam and succeeded in uniting their members to repel the attack of their opponents. The aim of the *Mufasssirun* in all the organizations like the *Izalah*, the *Boko Haram*, the *Shi'ah*, the *Sufis*, the Qur'anists and many others is to interpret the Qur'an in support of their sectarian ideologies and condemn their opponents. The *Tafsir* of the *Qadiriyyah* and the *Tijjaniyyah* mentioned above is a typical example of this trend. It is done the same way the *Izalah*, the *Shi'ah* and the Qur'anists are doing. Almost all the sects have made the *Qur'an* subjective to their sectarian views and this tendency of all the religious sects has caused disunity and weakness of the Muslims in Northern Nigeria. As against the united Muslim *Ummah* before, now sectarianism has weakened it and exposed it to be attack from our enemies within and without. Sectarianism has hindered the Muslims from understanding the real meaning of the Qur'an and its application in our daily life for our benefit in both here and the hereafter.

It is recommended that the Muslims should know the meaning of the Qur'anic contents in order to apply its teaching in practical life. It is the duty of the Muslim scholars to do this, so as to guide the people to understand the clear message of the *Qur'an*. And if this is achieved, it will help to minimize the problems that our society is facing in all our aspects of lives. It is believed that all the present problems facing the Muslims could be minimized drastically if not wiped off completely with the clear understanding

and application of the Qur'anic teachings. This can only be achieved if the Muslim scholars should conduct their *Tafsir* free from sectarian biases and face the Qur'an with plain and clear mind. Ideas are to be drawn from the Qur'an but not to impose them on the Qur'an. The *Mufasssirun* of all sects and organizations should remember and be cautioned by the saying of the prophet (SAW) that "*Whoever said about the Qur'an out of his fancy or out of what he did not know, should find himself a position in the Hell fire,*" May Allah protect us.

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